

Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs **1998 Edition (February 24, 1998)**

“Environs” means the historic property’s associated surroundings and the elements or conditions which serve to characterize a specific place, neighborhood, district, or area. Generally, the boundary of “notice” will be recognized as the environs of a listed property or district. In some cases during identification of character-defining features, the environs may be determined to extend beyond the boundary of notice as set forth in K.S.A. 75-2715 – 75-2725, as amended.

Standards for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs

1. The character of a historic property’s environs should be retained and preserved. The removal or alteration of distinctive buildings, structures, landscape features, spatial relationships, etc. that characterize the environs should be avoided.
2. The environs of a property should be used as it has been historically or allow the inclusion of new uses that require minimal change to the environs’ distinctive materials, features, and spatial relationships.
3. The environs of each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes to the environs that have acquired historic significance in their own right should be retained and preserved.
4. Demolition of character-defining buildings, structures, landscape features, etc. in a historic property’s environs should be avoided. When the severity of deterioration requires removal within the environs, compatible reconstruction shall occur.
5. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
6. New additions, exterior alterations, infill construction, or related new construction should not destroy character-defining features or spatial relationships that characterize the environs of a property. The new work shall be compatible with the historic materials, character-defining features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the environs.
7. Moved historic properties that have not retained or acquired historic significance in their new environs shall be considered as artifacts without environs.

Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs

Introduction

In an environs review the objective is to determine the impact of a proposed project on a listed property and its environs. While the issue of materials and design may be discussed in relationship to compatibility with the environs and impact on the listed property, personal opinions regarding the aesthetics of a proposed project are not germane.

Identify, Retain, and Preserve

Like the treatments for historic properties, guidance for environs review begins with the identification of the character-defining features of the environs, its historic and current character, and what must be retained in order to preserve that character. The character of a listed property's environs may be defined by form, exterior materials, such as masonry, wood, or metal; exterior features and elements, such as roofs, porches, windows, or construction details; as well as size, scale and proportion, massing, spatial relationships, etc.

Protect, Maintain, Repair, and/or Replacement

After identifying those materials and features that are important, the effect of the proposed work on the environs of a listed property must be determined. Work that generally involves the least degree of intervention is recommended. Protecting historic features and materials through cyclical maintenance and repair lessens the need for replacement which is always the less preferable alternative and usually more costly. Substitute materials can be installed, when the degree of deterioration requires replacement, provided the substitution is compatible with the environs.

Alterations / Additions for the New Use

Interior alterations of properties within the environs of a listed property have little, if any, impact on the listed property. Exterior alterations of properties in the environs of a listed property are generally needed to assure continued use, but it is important that such alterations do not radically change, obscure, or destroy character-defining spaces, materials, features, and/or relationships. Alterations may include demolition of structure(s) and/or features, providing additional parking, modification of entries, installation of signs, or cyclical maintenance involving repairs with non-compatible materials.

The construction of additions is sometimes essential for the continued use of a property, but the addition should only be reviewed for its impact on the listed property and the environs. The line of sight between a listed property and a proposed project is often directly related to the impact of a project on the listed property.

DEMOLITION

Recommended

Retain the features that define the character of a listed property's environs when possible.

When removal of a character-defining feature or structure is necessary, a new feature or structure that is compatible with the environs should be installed.

Not Recommended

Demolition of character-defining features or structures with no plans for compatible replacement features or structures.

Demolition of character-defining structure(s) with the intention of creating open space, such as a parking lot or park.

Demolition of character-defining structure(s) and replacement of it with a historic building moved to the site.

SIGNS

Recommended

Retain existing signs that characterize the environs of a listed property.

Replacement and new signs should be compatible and/or match the size and shape of signs in the environs.

Not Recommended

Removal of existing signs that characterize the environs of a listed property.

Installing new signs that are incompatible and/or inconsistent with the size, shape, and character of the signs that are typical in the environs.

ZONING

Recommended

Maintain zoning that continues the historic land use in the environs of a listed property.

When rezoning is required within the environs of a listed property, the impact of the rezoning should be considered the steps taken to mitigate adverse effects.

When replatting is necessary, all subsequent new construction should be compatible with the environs in relationship to the setbacks, form, size, scale, massing, etc.

Not Recommended

Rezoning to allow development that is incompatible and/or inconsistent with the character of the environs.

Speculative or spot rezoning without a well-defined use for the property that is compatible with the environs.

Any rezoning without design documents indicating the compatibility of the proposed new use, additions, and/or infill construction.

Replatting to facilitate new construction that is incompatible and/or inconsistent with the character of the environs of a listed property.

EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS TO STRUCTURES

Recommended

Retain existing features that characterize the environs of a listed property. When necessary, repair or replace deterioration to match original.

If roofs, porches, or other character-defining features are modified or added, they should be compatible and/or consistent with common or typical roofs, porches, or other features found in the environs of the listed property.

When replacement of features or materials is necessary, design of new features and selection of new materials should be compatible with and/or match the composition and appearance of features of materials being replaced.

Not Recommended

Removal or alteration of features that characterize the environs of the listed property.

Replacement of materials with new materials that are not compatible and/or consistent with the types of materials that are common or typical in the environs.

Addition of features that are inconsistent and/or incompatible with the types of features that are common or typical of the environs.

ADDITIONS

Recommended

The scale of additions should not dominate the existing design patterns that characterize the environs of a listed property.

Additions should follow and/or be compatible with the patterns of setback, design, style, etc. that characterize the environs of the listed property.

Additions should be the same material and/or compatible with the existing structure.

Not Recommended

Additions that dominate the existing structure and/or the environs of the listed property.

Additions that destroy relationships between character-defining features of the listed property's environs.

Additions that are not compatible and/or typical of the patterns, design, style, etc. already established in the environs of a listed property.

Additions that obstruct important views and vistas from or to the listed property.

PARKING

Recommended

When possible maintain the parking patterns that characterize the environs of a listed property.

When new parking areas are required, design them to be consistent with the character of the environs and to intrude as little as possible.

SITE MODIFICATIONS

Recommended

Retain landscape features, such as trees on lot lines or along the street and open spaces, that characterize the environs of a listed property. When necessary, replace diseased or storm-damaged vegetation with similar new plants.

Retain existing character-defining fences, retaining walls, exterior lighting, public utilities and amenities, etc. When necessary, repair or replace deterioration to match original.

When adding a fence, retaining wall, exterior lighting, public utilities and amenities, etc., use a design, materials, and locations that are compatible with and/or typical in the environs.

Retain existing streets and alleys, and the associated features such as curbs and curb cuts, when possible.

When existing streets, alleys, and features must be repaired or replaced, use materials and design that are compatible and/or match the existing.

Not Recommended

Wholesale modification of traditional, character-defining parking patterns.

Creation of new parking areas that are incompatible and/or inconsistent with the parking patterns that characterize the environs.

Not Recommended

Removal of vegetation that characterizes the environs of a listed property.

Construction of new structures on planned or traditional open space that define the environs of the listed property.

Removal of existing character-defining fences, retaining walls, exterior lighting, public utilities and amenities, etc. from the environs of the listed property.

Replacement of existing (or installing new) character-defining fences, retaining walls, exterior lighting, public utilities and amenities, etc. with new features that are not compatible and/or consistent with the character of the environs.

Resurfacing, replacing, or adding new streets, alleys, and their associated features with materials and designs that are incompatible and or inconsistent with the environs.

NEW / INFILL CONSTRUCTION

Recommended

New construction should relate to the setback, size, form, patterns, texture, materials, and color of the features that characterize the environs of listed properties.

Where there are inconsistent setbacks or varied patterns, the new construction should fall within the range of typical setbacks and patterns in the environs of the listed property.

Not Recommended

New construction that is inconsistent and/or not compatible with the character of the environs of the listed property.

New construction that destroys existing relationships within the environs of a listed property.

New construction that dominates the environs

New construction that obstructs views or vistas from or to the listed property.